



# 29

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No Back Issues!

Hi and welcome to the 29th issue of HTT. Notice that I'm only taking subs through issue 35. That will be the last monthly edition of HTT. I won't bore you with a long list of reasons but I will no longer have the time to produce HTT on a prompt basis. I will hopefully, continue putting out 2 or 3 issues a year, however, any subscriber not happy with this schedule has only to write me for a refund on the balance of their subscription after issue 35. Another newsletter/review zine has appeared in my mailbox so let me pass on the particulars. TEMPLE OF SCHLOCK, c/o Liz Wyatt, p.o. box 365, East Syracuse, NY 13057. It cost 50 cents an issue and issue 3 is to be published in February. I have issue 2 in front of me and it's 8 pages, reviews include DAWN OF THE DEAD, CHAINED HEAT, BLOODSUCKING FREAKS, TOXIC AVENGER, and 11 others. The zine needs some stronger writers (hint, hint former HTT contributors) but its heart is in the right place. Give it a try.

DEEP RED by Charles Balun is back again and it's even better this go-around. The price is a bit steep but if you're hopelessly addicted to Euro-gore it's about the only game in town. Mike Gunderloy publishes FACT SHEET FIVE every 3 months and it's a fanzine junkie's delight. The current issue (#24) is 70 pages of micro-sized print, full of reviews of all types of publications. He not only mentions HTT (favorably I think) and other horror/sleaze zines but also hundreds of music/political/poetry/etc well, you name it and Mike covers it. It's \$2 per issue to Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502.



CRAZY FAT ETHEL 2 (1987) VIDEO CITY PRODUCTIONS  
DIRECTED BY NICK PHILIPS

This film is a shot-on-video sequel to CRIMINALLY INSANE (see HT#3 ) and it evinces none of the raw talent of that film. If CRIMINALLY INSANE can inspire a sequel, than by God anything is fair game. Following in the tradition of SILENT NIGHT: DEADLY NIGHT PART TWO, the majority of CRAZY FAT ETHEL 2 consist of footage from CRIMINALLY INSANE. Lucky us, not only are we subjected to poorly shot video footage( didn't their camera possess a white balance control?) but we get flashbacks of poorly shot filmed material as well.

It's 13 years later (and returning actress Priscilla Alden as Ethel looks 40 years older) and Ethel is being released from the asylum to a half-way house due to budget cuts (do we have Reaganomics to thank for this atrocity?). Mrs. Bartholomew runs the place (which looks like a cast member's house in the suburbs) and welcomes Ethel with open arms. Ethel conveniently flashes back to her past misdeeds (this kills a lot of running time and plays like a "greatest hits" advertisement for the first film) whenever she is sleeping or eating pretzels (after this parenthetical aside I promise no more, in this sentence at least), which occurs quite often). Before long she murders one of the workers (hairdo by Liberace) for eating a candybar in front of her. The crime is witnessed by a fellow patient who is knifed in the back by our portly psychotic. Mrs. Bartholomew, along with the doc responsible for Ethel's release, are finally killed in one of the most inept displays of effects as you are going to see( there are no credits for SFFX makeup because they're so non-existent)

What a shame such an original lowbudget gem as CRIMINALLY INSANE gets the slipshod sequel treatment. Cinematographer Karil Ostman(I wouldn't use my real name either) displays no rudiments of basic knowledge in his profession, but that's typical of everyone in front of and behind the camera. If you have seen CI, just play like this film never existed.

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STEPSISTERS (1974) REGAL VIDEO

STEPSISTERS (Doh, now there's a scary title) is yet another ripoff of the great French film, DIABOLIQUE. I'll bet that film's original director/screenwriter never thought their plot would become fodder for a redneck schlocker like this. You know you're in for rough time when a film like this tries to get artsy fartys in its direction during the first few minutes. Shots through steering wheels, actresses french kissing the camera lens, and other film school pretensions are just some of the techniques director Perry Tong (yeah, right) uses to disguise his complete lack of talent. The actors and actresses are nothing more than local yokels recruited to read lines off cue cards and struggle with displaying the simplest emotion.

Diana tires of her husband's constant abuse, so she leaves him and travels to her stepsister's (Norma) place. Turns out Norma is married to a sleazebag named Thorpe, who along with being a rancher, owns an airplane named Brutus, in case we're to dense to understand his motivations in this tacky melodrama. Thorpe wants Norma to sign her ranch over to him so he can sell it for cold hard cash. Norma refuses, which inspires no end of abuse from her husband. Diana exhibits signs of unstableness (she makes a date with the local stud and kills him with an axe for no apparent reason) which culminate when Thorpe attempts to rape Norma and ends up attacking Diana. Instead of Diana putting up a fight, she seems to enjoy the entire ordeal. In fact she and Thorpe become lovers and plot dear Norma's demise. Plot twist follows plot twist as Thorpe is shotgunned (as soon as he's hit, a bunch of guts pop into his hands but no wound appears on his chest) by Diana, Norma goes berserk and stabs Diana as the soundtrack warbles, "They're taking Miss Norma away".

The plot has been worked to death and to see it dragged out again in this hillbilly actioner (the type of movie FILM COMMENT raves about) is depressing to say the least. Blood flows freely (nudity is not a factor), but that is hardly a recommendation. This is the type of schlock that video seems destined to dredge up.

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THE ICEBOX MURDERS (1977) MOGUL VIDEO  
DIRECTED BY FRANCISCO GORDILLO

This slow moving directionless mess of a film is a great example of visual boredom. In the first 60 minutes not a damn thing happens and what does happen in the last 30 minutes isn't anything to write home about.

I've no idea the film's original title, but I'm positive it had no connection with a household appliance. Nowadays, when cheapjack producers look for whatever's popular in which to hang a title on, apparently mechanical contraptions as murder weapons are the latest trend. The nadir of this concept was established in Ulli Lommel's BOOGYMAN 2, where an actress was killed by an electric toothbrush. But I digress. Chanteau and her slutty girlfriend Sylvia, are invited to the villa of Chanteau's reclusive boyfriend, Dr. Grenault. They hang out with John, the doctor's retarded man-servant (when asked if he's ill, John replies, "It's the brain, you know.") and visit the local disco. Michele, the local stud, attempts to pickup Sylvia but is discouraged by John. Eventually the two women spy on John and the doctor lugging large packages into a huge icebox where it is revealed that Grenault is keeping the bodies of nubile (are there any other kind in these types of films?) women. What he does with their heads, I'll leave up to you to discover. Oh yeah, the doctor turns out to be Michele (he can only come out of his repressive shell under this disguise) which is painfully obvious the first time you see him in this disguise. Jack Taylor as Dr. Grenault will be instantly recognizable from such Spanish horror films as NIGHT OF THE SORCERERS, VENGEANCE OF THE MUMMY, and the

Blind dead guys +ilm HORROR OF THE ZOMBIES. He most recently played the part of a priest in CONAN THE BARBARIAN. As the years pass he has been forced into more villainous roles, mainly because Jack's beginning to look his age. No gore, no nudity, nor reason to see this film.

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HERE NOW THE NEWS++++ If you have seen EVIL TOWN on your video shelves and are wondering why old pros such as Regis Toomey & Dabbs Greer are appearing in a horror movie stuffed with Playboy bunnies here's the lowdown according to Variety: "The genesis of the film EVIL TOWN has been identified by reader John Donaldson, who reports a 1974 film, GOD DAMN DR. SHAGETZ (alternately titled GOD BLESS DR. SHAGETZ), featuring James Keach, Robert Walker, Dean Jagger, Dabbs Greer and Regis Toomey. Mardi Rustam, credited with shooting "additional scenes" on EVIL TOWN, shot new footage featuring Playboy model Lynda Wiesmeier in 1984 to come up with the finished film, currently in home video release via TWE. DR. SHAGETZ evidently was completed (it received an R rating from CARA in 1974) but not released." I really must salute Mr. Rustam for giving the home video industry that vital shot in the arm it so richly deserves.++++ Virgin Vision Video has CASSANDRA set for release January 27th. A woman has dreams that reflect the real murders of a psychotic killer. Darn, I was hoping for a documentary on Cassandra Peterson, explaining to me just why so many people find her Elvira persona so interesting (besides her obvious two talents that is).++++ The original Hulk Hogan, Mr. Paul Naschy himself will finally see his DRACULA'S GREAT LOVE released January 13th on MPI. Naschy has all the sexuality God gave a cantalope, but that doesn't stop him from getting nekkid with every woman he sees.++++ United Home Video has THE LAST SLUMBER PARTY set for January 29th. We can only hope.++++ Vista Vision is really scraping the bottom of the barrel when they advertise LEFT FOR DEAD as starring Elke Sommer. The plot (a man is accused of killing his wife) sounds more like a made-for-TV movie.++++ NIGHT SCREAMS is due out on Prism Video January 5th and from the plot description sounds like a by-the-numbers slasher pic. Complete with horny teenagers and horny escaped convicts, don't expect to read about it in HTT.++++ SLAUGHTERHOUSE on Charter Home Video will be released January 27th and it stars Joe Barton (big deal I know). I sense a new trend in Horror Movie marketing. Instead of featuring the weapon psychos use to off their victims, The film's title will utilize their place of employment.++++ MPI is rereleasing Mario Bava's quintessential slasher epic TWITCH OF THE DEATH NERVE. However, under that title a lot of the gore was removed so your best bet is to hunt down the Gorgon Video release of this film under the title BAY OF BLOOD.++++ TWE has VIDEO MURDERS on its December schedule. About a cop trying to protect an innocent girl from David Lee Shephard's video torture chamber. Renters wonder if this is going to be nerd horror or something unexpectedly of higher quality. Hopefully HTT can find out next time. ADIOS